



The employees of the Meat & Poultry Inspection Division (MPID) continue to provide another defense against foreign animal diseases as well as provide meat and poultry products that are as safe as any in the nation for West Virginia's consumers.

As a part of our regular operations, the MPID continues its emphasis on food safety through our first line of defense – our inspectors. Each inspector has completed in-depth training presented by our veterinary supervisors and assistant director both before being assigned in-plant duties and also on-the job training. Many of our inspectors have extensive experience and expertise in their positions that are the culmination of many years of service. This sort of knowledge and experience is priceless when providing a consistently robust level of food safety.

All inspectors are trained to recognize the antemortem and postmortem signs of infectious diseases and chemical residues/toxicity that might either intentionally or unintentionally threaten our food supply. These inspectors not only perform sanitation checks during every shift, but also randomly sample meat and poultry products for both economical and microbiological testing to provide an additional level of confidence for West Virginia's consumers.

For the year, the inspectors provided daily slaughter and processing inspections at 23 commercial establishments that included 14,262 computer scheduled inspection tasks as a result of their on-site observations. Concurrently, inspectors and veterinarians examined 6,296 animals before and after they were humanely slaughtered. As a result, 3 carcasses that totaled 950 pounds were condemned as being unfit for human consumption and removed from the food supply. Conversely, the MPID inspected and passed about 4.3 million pounds of processed meat and poultry products for sale to consumers in West Virginia, on which 12 tests were completed to guarantee the nutritional quality of those products. Per federal guidance, we are constantly expanding our microbiological testing and placing less emphasis on economic testing.

MEAT & POULTRY INSPECTION

The MPID conducts sampling and testing of these products for pathogens such as *Escherichia coli*, *Listeria monocytogenes*, and *Salmonella*. During FY 2014, 73 samples of ground beef product were collected from both commercial (inspected) establishments and retail-exempt establishments along with 24 samples of beef trimmings (used to make ground beef) from commercial establishments. 19 samples of beef trimmings were collected this year to be tested for 6 additional strains of pathogenic *E. coli*. These samples were tested and found to have no traces of *E. coli* O157:H7 nor the new strains of *E. coli*. Inspectors also collected 111 samples that were tested for *Salmonella*, all of which tested negative except for 2 carcass swab tests. The two positive *Salmonella* tests were serotyped out and not linked to any pathogenic outbreaks.

For Ready-to-Eat meat and poultry products, the MPID collected a total of 18 samples that were tested for *Listeria monocytogenes* and/or *Salmonella*. All but one of the samples tested negative. The positive sample along with potentially contaminated product was condemned and removed from the human food chain. Equipment and surfaces were subject to environmental swab testing to confirm adequate sanitation practices.

Although providing inspection at the 23 commercial plants

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is a large part of the service that MPID provides, we also routinely inspect the 27 custom establishments for sanitation and proper records that document the establishments' on-going compliance with all pertinent regulations such as ownership of products, proper labeling of products with "Not For Sale", and other requirements designed to protect the product's owner. These products are not eligible for sale but rather are for the use of the owner and his nonpaying guests.

The MPID also licenses distributors of meat and poultry products whose storage facilities are located in the state of West Virginia. Our compliance officer performs pre-licensing and unannounced annual reviews at these facilities to verify that products are being stored in a clean and sanitary manner. Currently, there are 222 licensed distributors in West Virginia of which 214 received unannounced inspections. The compliance officer also inspected the handling of meat products in 249 retail establishments as time allowed when he was not investigating consumer complaints regarding meat or poultry products or when he was not investigating reports of illegal operations. During FY 2013, a total of 9 consumer complaints were addressed.



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